The Ninth
United Nations
Congress on the
Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment
of Offenders

29 April-
8 May 1995
Cairo, Egypt

Less Crime

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

The United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme

The **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** is the major functional body of the United Nations providing policy guidance in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. Established by the Economic and Social Council in 1992 to replace the now defunct Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, the 40-member body is charged with developing, monitoring and reviewing the United Nations programme on crime prevention and mobilizing support for it among Member States. It is also expected to coordinate the activities of interregional and regional institutes on crime prevention and criminal justice.

The Commission has established as its priority themes international action to combat national and transnational crime, including organized crime; economic crime, including money laundering; the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment; crime prevention in urban areas, including juvenile and violent criminality; and improving the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice administration systems. Aspects of those themes are selected for consideration at each session.

Among the tasks assigned to the Commission is to make preparations for the United Nations Congresses on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which are held every five years. Eight have been held so far, and a ninth will take place in Cairo, Egypt, from 29 April to 8 May 1995.

The **Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch** of the United Nations Secretariat is the central repository in the United Nations system of technical expertise in matters of crime prevention, criminal justice, criminal law reform and major criminological concern. It prepares studies and reports for the quinquennial United Nations Congresses on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders as well as to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Chief of the Crime Branch is Eduardo Vetere, an Italian national, who is also secretary of the Commission.

The Branch formulates policy options and fosters standard-setting and the application of United Nations norms and instruments in the crime control field. It collects and analyses statistics, and provides technical assistance to Member States and regional institutes for crime prevention and control. It prepares periodic country-by-country surveys of crime trends and crime prevention and criminal justice policies and has established a United Nations Criminal Justice Information Network on which Member States and their agencies can draw via Internet.

Among its field activities, the Branch has provided technical assistance and advisory services in connection with United Nations missions in Cambodia, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, including the development of a training course for civilian police components of peace-keeping operations. It prepared and published a handbook on

United Nations

criminal justice, human rights and humanitarian law standards for United Nations peace-keeping police supervisors and contributed to the re-establishment of the police and criminal justice system in Cambodia and Somalia.

In its substantive work, the Branch works closely with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (based in Rome), as well as with the following United Nations–affiliated institutes: Regional Institutes for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Africa (Kampala), Asia and the Far East (Tokyo) and Latin America (San José), and the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (Helsinki). It also works with associated institutes in Vancouver, British Columbia; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Woden, Australia; and Siracusa, Italy.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper
DPI/1642/CRM—95-93309—April 1995—6M

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

United Nations Crime Congresses

Held every five years, the **United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders** is the major global forum for exchanging information and experiences, comparing criminal justice practices, finding viable solutions to crime and stimulating international action. Crime Congresses bring together representatives of the world's national Governments, specialists in crime prevention and criminal justice, scholars of international repute and members of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Their recommendations, issued through the **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**, impact on the legislative bodies of the United Nations — the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council — and on the criminal justice policies and practices of national and local governments.

The quinquennial Crime Congresses continue a tradition established by the former International Penal and Penitentiary Commission (IPPC). Comprising experts and professionals from mostly European countries, the IPPC held congresses every five years from 1885 to 1910 and from 1925 to 1935, and during the latter period was affiliated with the League of Nations. The IPPC was dissolved by General Assembly resolution 415 (V) of 1 December 1950, and its functions and archives were transferred to the UN in 1951.

From an early focus on penology and treatment of juvenile offenders, the scope of the UN Crime Congresses has broadened to include issues such as the relation between crime control and social and economic development and international responses to transnational crime.

First Congress

The First Congress convened in 1955 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Predominantly concerned with treatment of juvenile delinquents and the treatment of prisoners — the numbers in both categories had risen dramatically in post-war Europe — the First Congress looked into the possibilities of "open" penal and correctional institutions, the selection and training of prison personnel and the proper use of prison labour. It was attended by 512 persons from 61 countries and territories, observers and representatives from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and 235 individual participants.

The Congress approved a set of Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, based on IPPC revisions of standards endorsed by the League of Nations. The Standard Minimum Rules were later approved by the UN Economic and Social Council, and became a prototype for international models, standards, norms and guidelines affecting the administration of criminal justice.

Second Congress

Crime resulting from social changes accompanying rapid economic development, including juvenile delinquency, was at the centre of attention of the Crime Congress held in London in 1960. The range of issues discussed was broader than at the First Congress: special police services to prevent juvenile delinquency, the impact of the mass media on juvenile deviancy, the role of national planning in preventing crime, questions of short-term imprisonment and prison labour, and released prisoners' transition to community life.

United Nations

Third Congress

Newly independent third world nations appeared for the first time in large numbers at the 1965 Third Congress in Stockholm. Representatives of 74 participating Governments, and over 1,000 participants in all, developed policy on the relation between social change and criminality, community action for preventing crime, reduction of recidivism, probation policies and special preventive and treatment measures for juveniles and young adults.

Fourth Congress

The Fourth Congress, held at Kyoto, Japan, in 1970, was the first held outside Europe. "Crime and development" was the overall theme, and special emphasis was given to incorporation of prevention policies into development planning, research on social defence policies and community-based prevention.

The Congress also discussed nation-by-nation implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. A survey of Member States found the Rules had contributed to advancing basic human rights for millions of prisoners.

Fifth Congress

"Crime prevention and control — the challenge of the last quarter of the century" was the theme of the Fifth Congress, held in Geneva. Nearly 1,000 representatives of 101 countries and numerous organizations looked into the changing forms and dimensions of national and transnational crime and violence, including the role of organized crime in apparently legitimate businesses, criminality stemming from drug and alcohol abuse, and terrorism. The concept of victim compensation was discussed.

The 1975 Congress adopted recommendations on the abuse of economic power, drug traffic, terrorism, theft and destruction of cultural property, interpersonal violence and changing expectations of police performance. It approved a Declaration against the use of torture, which was adopted later that year by the General Assembly and in 1987 entered into force as an international convention. The convention obliges States parties to make torture a crime, prosecute offences and punish those found guilty. The Fifth Congress also laid the basis for the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, adopted by the General Assembly in 1979.

Sixth Congress

In 1980 the Crime Congress met in a developing country — Venezuela — for the first time. It was presented with the first detailed worldwide survey of crime, based on information received by the UN from 65 Member States. The study revealed that the great majority of both developed and developing countries were facing an escalation of violence and criminality, that crime was taking new forms and dimensions, and that traditional measures of prevention and control were under duress.

"Crime prevention and the quality of life" was the overall theme. UN norms and guidelines were recognized as important tools for Governments in dealing effectively with crime while preserving human rights. Juvenile justice was placed in the context of assured social justice for all children, and crime was examined in relation to abuses of power.

Emerging from the Congress was the Caracas Declaration, the first comprehensive document to link crime prevention to a broad range of human concerns and efforts. The Declaration, with its recommendations for standard minimum rules for juvenile justice, public participation in crime prevention, improved statistics and eradication of extralegal executions, was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 1980.

Seventh Congress

The theme of the 1985 Congress, in Milan, Italy, was "Crime prevention for freedom, justice, peace and development". Its major final document, the Milan Plan of Action, was subsequently approved by the UN General Assembly. The Plan of Action detailed a worldwide programme for prevention and criminal justice, including allocation of resources, action-oriented research and technical assistance to developing countries.

The Congress approved five other instruments that set standards for building crime prevention into development planning, the administration of juvenile justice, justice for crime victims, the independence of the judiciary and the transfer and treatment of foreign prisoners.

Eighth Congress

The site of the United Nations Crime Congress returned to Latin America in 1990, as the Congress convened in the Palacio de Convenciones in Havana. Over 1,400 participants from

127 countries discussed theft of archaeological treasures, the dumping of hazardous wastes in ocean waters, the burgeoning international trade in illicit drugs and the lethal connection between drug abuse and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and the prevalence of both among prison populations.

The Congress disseminated information on criminal justice computer networks, provisions for seizing the financial proceeds of organized crime and examining bank records, and the growing body of experience relating crime control to socio-economic development. The Congress also reviewed the development of community-based crime prevention and non-custodial alternatives to prison.

The Eighth Congress produced more international instruments than all the preceding Congresses combined. Among these were five model treaties — draft bilateral agreements that can guide national Governments in their negotiations. The model treaties covered extradition, mutual assistance in criminal investigations, transfer of proceedings in criminal prosecutions, transfer of supervision of offenders and prevention of crimes infringing on the cultural heritage of peoples.

The Congress also adopted a resolution calling for an intergovernmental working group to review the UN's crime prevention and criminal justice programme. The findings of the working group became the basis for a Ministerial Summit convened in Versailles, France, in 1991, and the eventual replacement of the UN Committee on Crime Prevention and Control by a new Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Ninth Congress

Set to meet 29 April–8 May 1995 in Cairo, Egypt, the Ninth Congress will further develop the UN's portfolio of criminal justice concerns. Heading the agenda will be plans to combat transnational crime syndicates and economic crime through stronger international cooperation and tighter controls on money laundering. There will be discussion aimed at defining the new legal realm of crimes against the environment, and of strategies to be used against violent crime, urban crime, crime among young people and violence inflicted on women. In the realm of technical assistance, attention will focus on helping developing countries to strengthen their criminal justice systems.

Preparations for the Ninth Congress included regional meetings held in 1994 in Bangkok, Thailand; Kampala, Uganda; Vienna, Austria; San José, Costa Rica; and Amman, Jordan. The Ninth Congress' consideration of organized crime will benefit from the achievements of two other 1994 meetings: the International Conference on Laundering and Controlling Proceeds of Crime, held in Courmayeur, Italy, 17-21 June; and the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, which took place in in Naples, Italy, 21-23 November.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper
DPI/1643/CRM—95-93312—April 1995—6M

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

The United Nations vs. Transnational Crime

Powerful international criminal groups now work outside national or international law. They include traffickers in drugs, money laundering, the illegal trade in arms — including trade in nuclear materials — and the smuggling of precious metals and other commodities. These criminal elements exploit both the new liberal international economic order and the different approaches and practices of States. They command vast sums of money, which they use to suborn State officials. Some criminal "empires" are richer than many poorer States. These problems demand a concerted, global response.

— Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

"Organized crime has become predominantly transnational in character", according to recent reports from the United Nations. But law enforcement worldwide remains predominantly local and national.

Without international cooperation, it is impossible for law enforcement agencies to obtain a clear picture of criminal operations that span countries and continents. A crime organization based in one country, for instance, may be smuggling valuables out of a different country and into several overseas markets. The proceeds are likely to be invested in front businesses in entirely different countries, which in turn become staging grounds for new operations.

Some of the steps in this process may not be illegal in and of themselves, and the wide range in severity and scope of national crime codes means that some activities that are illegal in one country may be permissible in another. Even if national authorities shut down syndicate operations inside their borders, that component of the modular operation is easily replaceable. As one analyst puts it: "Global conglomerates dealing in illicit activities survive and flourish because unilateral enforcement efforts by a single country generally disable only small segments of such operations."*

Transnational crime is also facilitated by economic globalization:

- Passenger volume on international commercial flights soared from 26 billion passenger miles in 1960 to 152 billion in 1974 and to more than 600 billion in 1992.
- Global imports rose from $330 billion in 1960 to $2,050 billion in 1980 and $3,500 billion in 1990; completion of the Uruguay Round of trade talks and the proliferation of free-trade agreements are likely to spur an even larger transnational flow of goods and services.
- Major currencies — primarily the dollar, and secondarily the deutsche mark and yen — are nearly universally exchangeable, smoothing the transition from illicit profit in one part of the world to apparently legitimate investment elsewhere.
- Trillions of dollars are exchanged through electronic transfers every day; in one New York–based bank network alone, $2 billion races through digital channels each minute. Furthermore, an expert estimates that "perhaps half of the industrialized world's stock of money resides in or passes through tax havens".**
- Increasing migration, combined with a general resurgence of ethnic loyalties and the hostility and economic hardship which migrants often face in new homelands, creates fertile

grounds for cohesive, hard-to-penetrate crime networks spanning many borders.

Syndicates also take advantage of centuries-old obstacles to international law enforcement cooperation: language and cultural differences, variations in crime codes and criminal justice practices, the desire to protect national sovereignty, and reluctance to share scarce resources or share credit for successes.

Development of the UN programme

1975 — Discussion of organized crime at the **Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders** in Geneva focused on "crime as business" at the national and transnational levels. Similarities were drawn between crimes of corporations and those of organized crime, both of which might involve the corruption of law enforcement and political authorities and tended to operate in secrecy, committing crimes which were difficult to detect.

While "crime as business" was a serious problem in many developed countries, crimes such as bribery, price-fixing, smuggling and currency offences were said to be especially severe problems for developing countries, since the national welfare and economic development of the whole society might be drastically affected by them. Governments acknowledged that terms relating to those types of crime were often vague and ambiguous, posing an obstacle to meaningful international cooperation in combating them.

1980 — Discussion of an agenda item on "offences and offenders beyond the reach of the law" at the **Sixth United Nations Crime Congress** in Caracas added new elements to the international perception of organized crime. Emphasis was placed on the concept of "abuse of power" in its various forms — political, economic and social — that were often interlinked. Among offences cited were activities which were legally defined as crimes but against which law enforcement agencies were relatively powerless, either because of the involvement of high-placed individuals or because of circumstances reducing the likelihood of their being reported or prosecuted.

Concern was expressed about the abuse of economic power by transnational corporations, since the victimized countries were often unable to deal with that problem effectively and individual countries were not always in a position to cope with transborder offences by corporations.

1985 — Evidence presented to the **Seventh United Nations Crime Congress** in Milan indicated the escalating activities of organized crime worldwide. Congress participants emphasized that national boundaries no longer constituted effective barriers against those criminal activities. By exploiting the discrepancies in the legislation of various countries, organized crime was achieving a high degree of impunity. At the same time, alarm was growing in many parts of the world at the global impact of drug trafficking by criminal groups.

The "Milan Plan of Action" recognized the international dimensions of crime and the need for a concerted response on the part of the community of nations. It saw a significant role to be played by the United Nations in fostering multilateral cooperation in combating transborder organized crime.

1988 — The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was adopted by a high-level international conference held in Vienna. The Convention is perhaps the most important international binding instrument aimed at combating organized transnational organizations and one of their most lucrative activities — international drug trafficking. Among the changes which States parties agree to work towards under the new treaty are criminalization of money laundering and increased cooperation in extradition, mutual legal assistance and transfer of criminal proceedings.

1990 — Within the framework of a discussion of action against organized crime and "terrorist criminal activities" at the **Eighth United Nations Crime Congress** in Havana, it was stressed that the increase in the number of independent countries, together with a true internationalization of criminal activities, had created a need for new international institutions. Countries' ad hoc cooperative activities of the past were now seen as inadequate.

In view of the frightening implications of criminal dealings in large sums of money, participants called for new legislative initiatives to curb money laundering.

Later that year, the General Assembly welcomed the recommendations of the Eighth Congress on the subject and took a substantive step towards international cooperation in combating transnational organized crime when it adopted four model treaties developed at the Congress, covering extradition, mutual assistance in criminal

[*] Malcolm Anderson, *Policing the World: Interpol and the Politics of International Police Cooperation* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989), page 26.

[**] Richard Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994), pages 385-389.

ters and transfer of supervision of offenders conditionally sentenced or conditionally released.

1991 — Two events organized in response to the General Assembly's appeal for cooperation in combating organized transnational crime, an **Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Strategies to Deal with Transnational Crime**, held in Smolenice, the Slovak Republic, and an **International Seminar on Organized Crime** in Suzdal, Russian Federation, formulated recommendations covering national, regional and international action.

In the meantime, a General Assembly-mandated **Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme** in Versailles resolved stepped-up international cooperation against crime. It was recognized that only the United Nations could effectively coordinate such action, by developing and implementing a concerted strategy directed at providing practical help. In following up the recommendations of that Meeting, the General Assembly moved to establish a Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice under the Economic and Social Council (replacing the UN's Committee on Crime Prevention and Control).

1992 — At its first session in Vienna, the new **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** set as one of the priorities for the United Nations crime programme the question of "national and transnational crime; organized crime; economic crime, including money laundering; and the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment". It called for further analysis by the United Nations of the impact of organized crime upon society at large and for an examination of the possibility of coordinating multilateral efforts against money laundering.

1994 — The **International Conference on Preventing and Controlling Money Laundering** drew approximately 250 participants from 45 countries, as well as relevant organizations, international financial institutions and criminology institutes, to Courmayeur, Italy, from 18 to 20 June to examine trends in money laundering and devise a global counter-strategy.

The meeting, organized by the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council and held under the auspices of the United Nations Crime Branch, urged strong regulatory and law enforcement provisions to make it difficult for financial and investment services to be used for criminal purposes. Limitation of financial secrecy was called an "absolute *sine qua non* of serious money laundering control and of sincere international cooperation". Participants called for application of the "know your customer" rule advocated by some international bodies, particularly with respect to abolishing anonymous bearer accounts and to identifying the real party represented by a "nominee". They also urged laws to require the reporting of suspicious transactions, and the expansion of existing reporting requirements to cover funds derived from a wider range of crimes.

The Conference further recommended identification of new kinds of businesses which are acting as launderers and determination of the feasibility of extending present regulations beyond banking and traditional financial institutions, with a view to preventing rather than simply attempting to prosecute money laundering.

Recommendations from the Courmayeur meeting were submitted to the 21-23 November **World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime**, held in Naples, Italy.

"Crime multinationals pose a threat to the international democratic order", UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali warned ministers of justice and interior, 142 national delegations and representatives of international development and crime-fighting agencies at the highest-level global meeting ever to be convened against transnational crime.

Noting that wide variations among criminal codes obstruct international cooperation and allow international syndicates safe havens from which to operate, participants agreed on the value of "closer alignment of legislative texts concerning organized crime". They also endorsed greater use of bilateral and multilateral agreements on extradition and exchange of witnesses and evidence; personnel exchanges between national law enforcement agencies; and international assistance to criminal justice systems in developing countries. States "should consider" making money laundering a crime, whether or not an illegal origin of the funds can be proven; requiring greater transparency of banks and other financial enterprises; and establishing laws providing for the seizure of organized crime assets, the Naples Declaration said.

The Conference also took a step towards realizing the idea of a legally binding international convention on transnational crime: national Governments will be asked their viewpoints on the

Governments will be asked their viewpoints on the advisability of establishing such a convention. In another resolution, the Conference welcomed the offer of Italy to host an international task force charged with examining the possibility of establishing an international centre for training law enforcement personnel to combat transnational crime.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper
DPI/1644/CRM—95-93315—April 1995—6M

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on *the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders*

Transnational crime disrupting development and peace

Taking advantage of the dominant economic trends of the 1990s — globalization and liberalization — transnational crime is now a major force in world finance, able to alter the destinies of countries at critical stages of their economic and social development.

With combined annual sales that dwarf the gross domestic product of most countries and a customary 70 per cent rate of profit which allows them to amass assets more rapidly than banks or large corporations, the biggest syndicates are now world-class financial powers in their own right. Also ominous is the new tendency for the traditionally insular and clannish world powers of crime — the Hong Kong-based Triads, South American cocaine cartels, Italian mafias, the Japanese *Yakuza*, the Russian *Vory v Zakonye* and affiliated newcomers, and rapidly expanding West African crime groups — to make deals with each other and combine operations.

The principal threat, however, lies in the tendency of transnational crime to subvert the benefits of globalization and liberalization, on which industrialized as well as developing countries are pinning their hopes for economic growth, and bring out destructive aspects of the process.

Currencies in crisis

The December 1994 devaluation of the Mexican peso provides a graphic example. It was triggered by fiscal and trade imbalances aggravated by the movement of "hot" money — speculative or short-term investments that enter and leave national economies rapidly and at will. How much of that money was — and is — not only "hot" but "black" (the proceeds of crime) or "gray" (laundered or invested so as to illicitly evade taxation) is an open question.

"The transformation of Mexico's political and economic system in the last few years means that central controls have deteriorated, and new measures have not yet taken their place," says Mexican economist Luís Rubio. "As a result there has been an increase in illicit activity, particularly as related to narcotics traffic."

Mr. Rubio cites a United States Treasury estimate that more than a quarter of the funds used to purchase recently privatized Mexican banks was of illicit origin.

Mexico is a strategic transit point for drug money because of its geographical and commercial access to the United States, by far the largest consumer of illicit narcotics, and cultural and commercial ties to the rest of Latin America. It is generally estimated that 70 per cent of the cocaine consumed in the US enters via Mexico, and the US Drug Enforcement Agency estimates that operatives in Mexico charge a 40 to 50 per cent commission for their work.

The trade has taken on all the attributes of large-scale commerce: traffickers are purchasing truck fleets and warehouses in the maquiladora zone adjacent to the US, and the *New York Times* reports that confederates are flying cocaine into Mexico on fully loaded Boeing 727 and Caravelle jets stripped of their passenger seats.

Cocaine in transit is not the only source of illegal funds. Sales are generated by extensive cultivation within Mexico of cannabis (marijuana) and poppies (for the production of heroin) and numerous methamphetmaine ("speed") laboratories, as cited in the 1995 report of the UN's International Narcotics Control Board.

In addition, the Mexican economy is one of the many around the world subject to rapid liberalization and large-scale privatization, a pattern that attracts money launderers handling funds that may have come from Europe, Asia, Africa or North America, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean.

"Mexico is one of the major money-laundering countries in the hemisphere, and the lowered barriers brought on by the North American Free Trade Agreement is aggravating the situation," says Charles

Intriago, editor of *Money Laundering Alert*. "It's difficult to imagine any economic developments in Mexico unaffected by money laundering. In regard to the rapid flows of money taking advantage of the ups and downs of the Mexican bolsa, Mr. Intriago points out that "the money managers of international crime are as astute as any Wall Street financier".

Once the devaluation was implemented — bringing crushing hardship to the Mexican people and disrupting financial markets around the world — money launderers moved quickly to take advantage. Holding large amounts of dollars suddenly worth 30 per cent more relative to the peso, money launderers were reported buying pesos with which they purchased moveable Mexican assets such as works of art, luxury automobiles and boats for sale in other countries for dollars. These dollars in turn could be recycled into pesos, and the process repeated.

According to a 1993 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) survey, drug money in economies around the world stimulates consumption of imports and luxury goods, favours speculation over investment in productive export enterprises and fuels inflation. In addition to these factors, all evident in the 1994-1995 Mexican crisis, is impact of political de-stabilisation. Mexican national confidence was badly shaken by the 1994 a of the presidential candidate as well as the Secretary-General of the country's leading political party. The public perception that both crimes may have been initiated by organized crime, whether or not corroborated by the facts, was itself a major factor undermining the confidence of legitimate investors and bringing on the devaluation.

Russia is another country where the 1990s imperatives of privatization, deregulation and competition for investments, markets and hard currency have opened the door to transnational crime.

- In 1982 there were four banks in the country, all closely regulated by the Soviet central bank. Today, there are at least 2,000, and until recently bank charters could be purchased for the price of a luxury car. Many of these banks are reportedly fronts for criminal organizations, both domestic and foreign.
- Russian crime groups and money launderers acting on behalf of international syndicates "buy privatization vouchers or directly purchase businesses and thereby exercise control over a vast range of enterprises", according to a report to a June 1994 international conference on money laundering.
- Roubles as well as smuggled arms and valuable metals worth billions of dollars leave the country in an unregulated fashion each month, and there is a substantial inflow of black and gray money.

"There are all sorts of conspiracy theories floating around as to how the rouble is being manipulated for speculative advantage", remarks Guy Dunn of Control Risks Group, a London-based consulting firm. "But we can safely say that the monetary system is so immature, and the amounts of illegal money flowing in and out of the country is so huge, that the Russian financial system is held hostage by the mafia." During the October 1994 currency crisis, the central bank halted a 20 per cent drop in the value of the rouble with an intervention of $150 million, and "if you can temporarily stabilize the currency for that much, you can de-stabilise it for the same amount", Mr. Dunn said.

Wealth and reach of organized crime

Russian syndicates have established a dominant position in Eastern and Western Europe, controlling the prostitution industry and bringing home an estimated quarter-million stolen cars each year. But their international impact is eclipsed by the less-publicized wealth and reach of the Triads, an intricate network of Chinese crime organizations with a history dating back to the nineteenth century opium trade.

The Triads operate in every major city with a substantial Chinese population, bringing in an estimated $200 billion a year from extortion, prostitution, heroin, alien smuggling, entertainment, the media and banking. The liberalized Economic Zones in Fujian and Guandong provinces, China, are favoured sites for investing profits, and the Triads' banking expertise, Hong Kong base of operations and ethnic ties with the mainland population allow them privileged access.

The Fujian-Guangdong economic juggernaut is the engine of growth in China, and the Chinese economy in turn is considered a linchpin to continuing growth in East and South-East Asia. But Chinese authorities as well as economic experts are concerned that boom could turn to bust under the destabilizing impact of speculative investment and the rapidly widening gap between rich and poor — both exacerbated by crime group penetration.

Also causing alarm are the nature of some of the investments. "These include cargo facilities and bonded goods sales at the Fujian International Airport, a large-scale containerized cargo facility to handle sea-borne exports in Xiamem Island and a large export-processing warehouse in Shenzen for containerized shipment of goods by air and sea through Hong Kong," an expert witness told a United States investigatory committee in 1994. Cargo containers are now the favoured means for shipping narcotics, other smuggled commodities, and even bales of currency from drug sales.

The illegal state and the clandestine economy

For a time in the early 1980s, criminal organizations involved in the cocaine trade were widely acknowledged to be running the government of Bolivia. Similar pre-conditions — debt, a depressed market for primary commodities, pressures brought on by a changing international economic environment — led to Charles Taylor's rise to power in Liberia in the early 1990s. Although he failed to consolidate control of the Government, Taylor remains a national power broker, and his methodology is serving as a model for military, crime and political opposition leaders in other African countries.

"You just need some crack cocaine, some 13-year olds separated from their families, and some cheap East European weapons and you can control territory", is how one observer characterizes the process. The territorial potentates then strip natural resources for sale overseas, and secondarily engage in drug trafficking and smuggling, while avoiding governmental obligations such as payments on national debt, providing minimal services to the general populace, meeting international standards and honoring international conventions. This scheme works most effectively in countries with civil conflicts, conveniently saleable natural resources such as diamonds and precious stones, and impoverished populations — and there are easily half a dozen in Africa answering that description.

Although borne of the economic and political difficulties afflicting Africa, these modern-day fiefdoms require an appropriate international environment. The weapons and the hard drugs come from outside Africa, and the purchasers of raw materials are either crime syndicates or international businessmen with few scruples as to how they turn a profit. The gangster territories, in turn, provide new base areas for the expansion and consolidation of transnational crime networks.

Criminal convergence

The rapid expansion of cross-continental operations means that the major crime syndicates are more frequently crossing paths. While there is no desire to merge organizations, there are indications that they are willing to enter into mutually beneficial arrangements:

- Italian mafiosi are advising Russian crime groups on money-laundering techniques, and high-level meetings to facilitate collaboration have been held in Warsaw and Prague.
- Last year, more than a tonne of Colombian cocaine was seized by Russian police in St. Petersburg, and Colombians arrested in the same city have been charged with helping Russians to set up drug-producing laboratories. They are also known to be interested in the export potential of the millions of acres of cannabis (marijuana) and poppies (for the production of heroin) inside the territory of the former Soviet Union.
- Arms and stolen goods are exchanged between Russian gangs and the Yakuza through the east Russian port of Vladivostock.
- The illegal amphetamine known as "ice" is produced in South China labs and distributed via Hong Kong on routes jointly coordinated by the Triads and the Yakuza.
- The ancient "Silk Road" that was the first link between the East and the West has been revived as a Central Asian heroin corridor, linking Afghani and Pakistani producers with European distributors via crime groups in former Soviet republics.
- A successful multi-national law enforcement "sting", called Operation Dinero, uncovered direct ties between leading Italian and Colombian smugglers. In the course of the 1994 investigation, a crime family-owned ship suspected of trying to violate the UN embargo against Croatia was stopped, and two large cargo containers with arms and ammunition were discovered.

Crime and development

"The capital that is accumulated in Russia is not flowing into productive opportunities, but into speculation, short-term investments and luxury spending," says Jozef van Brabant, Principal Economic Affairs Officer at the United Nations.

Most newly formed Russian businesses are in the service sector, Mr. van Brabant points out, and most are owned by are necessarily cooperate with organized crime. Restaurants and night clubs are especially common start-ups. As a result, imports now make up 60 per cent of Russian consumption — as opposed to 10 - 20 per cent in most large countries.

A decline in "official" GDP of 18 per cent in 1993, and a 25 per cent slide in industrial production, stand in eerie contrast to a 10 per cent increase in aggregate personal income during the same year. The gap indicates the size of criminal and off-the-books economic activity. It also explains the the Government's difficulty collecting taxes, a major cause of the budgetary crises which continue to plague Russia.

Further inefficiencies are brought about by corruption of public officials and extortion of legitimate businesses — practices which the Russian gangs, the Italian mafias, the Yakuza, the Triads and the Cali cartel all excel.

A similar misallocation of economic and human resources takes place wherever transnational crime organizations operate — which is in most of the world.

A UNDP survey of the effects of drug money on Colombia, Peru and Bolivia finds that trafficking brings large amounts of foreign exchange into these countries, fueling inflation and bringing down the return on exports. Production of goods for export is further discouraged by money laundering which, according to the survey, "fosters contraband activity, often lowering the costs of goods smuggled; propitiates the underbilling of imports and the overbilling of exports; stimulates the flight of capital and induces mistrust of foreign investors, thus affecting the equilibrium between savings and investment, as well as legal employment generation". The Economist points out, in a 1995 article on Colombia, that "where the main purpose of investment is to launder drug money, the effect is often to crowd out legal businesses". This is because the main objective of the money launderers is to transform illicit money into legitimate assets; it is in their interest to keep a business in operation even if it sells goods or services below cost. Legitimate businesses cannot set their prices in this fashion.

In the weak economies of sub-Saharan Africa, transnational crime's effect on social and economic development is crystalling rapidly . The focal point is the African crime capital of Lagos.

Lagos became a transit point for South American cocaine in the 1980s. When prices for oil —

Nigeria's economic mainstay — plummeted in the mid-1980s, young college-educated Nigerians who saw their careers disappear overnight decided to go with a commodity with more of a future. At first working under the tutelage of the Colombian cartels, the Lagos-based groups now control cocaine routes originating in the Andean highlands and passing through Brazil. Channels for South-East Asian heroin were also established. The intensity of involvement is indicated by an African newspaper report that there are so many Nigerians languishing in Thai jails that the Government of Thailand is asking for their repatriation.

Similar types of crime organizations, with greater or lesser Colombian involvement, were established in nearby West African countries. These economies were also hard hit by falling prices for primary commodities, including cocoa, coffee and copper. Syndicate inroads were facilitated by the structural adjustment programmes debt-ridden countries agreed to in order to receive loans from the International Monetary Fund. Promoting economic liberalization and governmental austerity, structural adjustment set off a desperate scramble to mobilize capital in countries with depressed legal economies. An impoverished populace with fewer public services to rely on became more amenable to recruitment into organized crime, police forces were weakened under austerity budgets and officials became more susceptible to corruption.

"The drug trade in Africa has developed hand-in-hand with structural adjustment," concludes Tara O'Connor of the Control Risks Group.

The fallout from West African transnational crime:

- In addition to flooding established markets in Europe and North America, drug distribution networks were established on the African continent. Abuse of hard narcotics, relatively unknown in sub-Saharan Africa before 1990, is now a major problem.
- Crime groups are a major impediment to a democratic transition in Nigeria, traditionally considered the most politically and economically influential sub-Saharan African nation.
- South Africa's status as an international model of political reconciliation and the new engine of economic growth for Africa is in jeopardy due to penetration by Lagos crime groups. A rapidly growing demand for cocaine, a sophisticated financial infrastructure coveted as a base for money laundering, the economic and political imperative of rapidly attracting investments, the presence of unemployed civilians with paramilitary training and disaffection among the newly organized security forces all point to the possibility that a rising regional power may become a playing field for transnational crime.
- The Lagos-controlled East-West cocaine routes first intensified Brazil's importance as a transit point, and then the nearly inevitable spillover effect swelled domestic marketing of the drug. The rapid growth of Brazilian cocaine gangs brought about military occupation of Rio de Janeiro's hillside favelas (low-income neighborhoods) and army patrols on Rio's famed beaches.

Avenues for international cooperation

Experts contend that coordinated international action and greater harmonization of criminal justice systems can drastically curtail the power of transnational crime.

"A successful effort will entail a more innovative use of existing and new bilateral and multilateral legal mechanisms as well as more uniformity in national actions, so that law enforcement officials can be as mobile and efficient as new organized criminals," according to an article in a Washington, D.C., criminal justice journal.

- Informal measures such as personnel exchanges between national law enforcement agencies, regional and international seminars and conferences, and ongoing information exchanges have proven effective in encouraging a transnational subculture based on common functions and objectives. "It is this transnational identity — based on the notion that a cop is a cop and a criminal is a criminal, no matter what their respective nationalities — that provides the oil and glue of contemporary international law enforcement," writes author Ethan A. Nadelmann.
- Technical and technological assistance to police, judiciaries, penal institutions and other criminal justice agencies in developing and transitional countries disrupts organized crime while promoting domestic political and economic stability.
- Extradition of fugitives is crucial to international cooperation. Greater harmonization among criminal justice systems would facilitate cooperation, as would adoption of the Model Treaty on Extradition elaborated at a 1990 UN Crime Prevention Congress.
- Mutual legal assistance treaties (MLATs) are legal instruments providing for the exchange of evidence and witnesses between countries. As with extradition, nationalist sentiments and differing law codes are obstacles to full use of these agreements. But when seriously implemented, MLATs such as the 1977 accord between the United States and Switzerland concerning money laundering and bank secrecy and the 1985 "international subpoena" arrangement between the US and Italy have proven effective. A Model Treaty on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters was drawn up by the UN, also at the 1990 Crime Congress.
- Internationally harmonised measures against money laundering have been called for by Interpol, by the industrialized country-organized Financial Action Task Force and at a June 1994 money-laundering conference run by the UN's Crime Prevention Branch. Measures include limitations on bank secrecy, regulation of the many non-bank businesses and professionals now conducting financial operations, national mechanisms for asset forfeiture, and codification of money laundering as a crime in itself.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper by the United Nations Reproduction Section, New York
DPI/1645/CRM—95-10656—April 1995—6M

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

Urban Crime–Policies for Prevention

Cities are growing rapidly — less than a third of the world population lived in the cities in 1955; by 2005, urban settings will contain half of humanity.

But urban crime is growing even faster, according to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch. A study conducted by the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) indicates that urban crime has become a frequent occurrence during this period — with more than half of the urban population worldwide likely to have been victimized at least once in the study period 1988-1993 — and that victimization rates tend to be the highest in large cities. Proud centres of commerce and culture like Los Angeles, Lagos, Moscow and Rio de Janeiro appear to many observers to be on the way to becoming armed encampments, unable to ensure the daily safety of average citizens.

Apart from the human suffering inflicted, crime is a major impediment to development. Corporate investors, international development agencies and local artisans and merchants alike are discouraged from initiating or sustaining economic activity by the threat of crime and violence. If the security of cities cannot be guaranteed, nations cannot be expected to move safely along the path of economic and social development.

The often-prescribed treatment — more cops, more courts, more correctional facilities — has proved ineffective. Rather than providing a solution, such measures are becoming a large part of the cost of crime.

The Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) pegs the annual United States crime bill at $90 billion for criminal justice systems alone. In addition, $65 billion is spent for private security, there is $45 billion in property losses, $50 billion written off to urban decay and loss of investment, and $170 billion for ruined lives and medical expenditure. The cash-strapped Governments of developing countries devote between 10 and 14 per cent of their budgets to police and prisons, according to the United Nations.

Strategies for security

As the incidence of wars between nations appears to be declining in the 1990s, world attention is more clearly focused on threats to the security of individuals, families and ethnic groups within nations. Crime, increasingly an urban phenomenon, is high on the list of United Nations human security concerns. To move beyond reactive responses to crime after it has already occurred, the search for solutions is concentrated on preventive measures.

The March 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen is treating crime, breakdowns in family structures and traditional cultures and the sprawling growth of dysfunctional cities as interrelated aspects of social disintegration. As a preparatory activity, an International Colloquium of Mayors was convened in August 1994, allowing over 100 city leaders to trade views on dealing with crime and other urban ills.

Urbanization will be the focus of Habitat II when it meets in Istanbul, Turkey, in June of 1996, and exchange of experiences in reducing and preventing crime is on its agenda. The holistic approach endorsed by conference organizers

recognizes that employment, housing, provision of services and the presence of a sense of community directly affect the incidence of crime.

A major theme of the 1995 Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders concerns strategies for preventing urban crime and juvenile and violent criminality, including the question of victims' rights and redress, and a Crime Congress workshop will focus on urban policy and crime prevention.

Some of the strategies that will be discussed at the Crime Congress workshop and examples of their implementation are summarized below.

The establishment of central, provincial or state and local coordinating councils, involving both governmental and non-governmental actors, have long been urged by the United Nations. Cooperative efforts of this kind optimize scarce resources, create self-reliant communities and enhance quality of life and security.

In the 1980s, countries such as France and Spain pioneered city-level community action plans to prevent crime, which were adopted and developed in other European countries. France has more than 750 municipal crime prevention councils with joint planning between housing authorities, social services, schools and police. Evaluations of the French councils suggest that they are responsible for reducing crime by 15 per cent.

A multidisciplinary, partnership-based prevention committee was established in 1994 in Villa Maria, an Argentinian city of 70,000. Due to a joint effort by various city services, a police-youth branch, a parenting-skills training programme, secondary school prevention committees and a victim assistance service have been established or are being planned. A farm-school called Los Amigos is recognized as an innovative model for intervention with homeless street children.

"It is now a well-established fact that crime rates are higher in societies in which wealth is distributed very unevenly and there is tremendous disparity in access to education, employment, health care and culture", according to a supporting document prepared for the Crime Congress workshop. Affirmative action to help the disadvantaged is an imperative of the tenets of social justice as well as sound crime prevention.

Murder is the most frequent cause of death for the population of Cali, Colombia. The local government mounted a programme called DESEPAZ (Development, Security and Peace), based on the assumption that violence is a curable social disease. Its slogan is: "Peace is the respect of other people's rights. Peace is not provided by the government but is the result of everyone's involvement and effort." Every week, a two-hour problem-solving meeting attended by the mayor and community leaders and open to the public is held in one of Cali's 20 districts. The process has led to a small-business development programme for street vendors, youth groups and women at home. A home-building programme led to the development of 25,000 lots for low-income families, the largest residential project ever to be mounted in Colombia.

It is reported that there are 1,500 street gangs in Mexico City. The Institute of Social Research of the National Autonomous University of Mexico City first studied the gangs and then decided to rechannel the youths' energy by giving them a public voice. A live radio show ran for 144 consecutive Saturdays, with gang members performing music and reading prose and poetry. A music production company organized rock concerts and published a fan magazine. On a broader scale, the attorney general's office instituted an anti-drug programme throughout Mexico that works through the schools, parents and the media. Mural painting, paying jobs and sports are part of the programme, as is promoting regional identity and pride.

One of the participants in the Mayors' Colloquium, Mayor Nabila Fares of Rabiya, Lebanon, cited a programme to educate and train women in her city, as they are often forgotten in job training programmes, but are directly responsible for keeping families together.

Immediate steps can be taken to reclaim the urban environment and recreate a sense of community. Migrants in multicultural cities, who have internalized the culture conflict between two worlds, can be assisted in gaining new identities and allegiances.

Nairobi has seen an increasing incidence of pickpocketing, car theft and robberies, and has also become a hub of international drug trade oper-

ating out of Asia. A citywide conference held in response, called "Nairobi We Want", was attended by 3,000 people. An action plan was drafted, to be implemented by the city government. Mayor Steve Mwangi says that the city's difficulties can be overcome through "faith and resolve". He is working to make sure that residents see Nairobi as their home and are willing to stay and work to ensure change.

In the city of Karachi, Pakistan, a second generation is coming of age in squatter settlements lacking adequate water supply, sewage, schools and public utilities. There has been constant struggle between the migrants of different ethnic groups, the indigenous local population and the police, and, in the late 1980s, car thefts, indiscriminate rifle fire and kidnapping for ransom became daily occurrences. In response, the Orangi Pilot Project created income-generating credit systems for the settlements, and the Edhi Trust has set up blood banks, ambulance services and drug rehabilitation services, while caring for destitute women and children who are victims of violence. A longer-range solution that has been suggested is to more fully involve settlement dwellers in city government, bringing their experience and ideas to bear.

From megalopolises like Mexico City and New York to smaller cities, urban management has been deployed to reduce the opportunities for crime through zoning, setting architectural standards and design of transport systems. But urban planning is increasingly going beyond "situational crime prevention" measures to look at cities as complex ecologies of economic development, social integration and neighbourhood life, all impacting crime and security.

Countries such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Israel have launched wide-ranging consultations of urban design professionals, to identify the elements of urban planning likely to promote security. For instance, a 1985 campaign in a crime-ridden housing project in Delft, the Netherlands, integrated recreational programmes, social workers, housing supervision and sanitation, environmental modifications of public spaces and reorientation of housing units. Residents were consulted systematically about all aspects of the programme. The measured results were nothing short of spectacular: the number of offences per 100 housing units was cut in half in only three years.

Despite an increase in property and drug-related crimes in recent years, Japan remains an industrialized country with an exceptionally low crime rate. Cultural factors such as a sense of honour, responsibility to the community and a high level of informal social control have been advanced as explanations; but the systemic design of police deployment surely also plays a role. There are 15,000 "Police Box" stations — small buildings outfitted with radio equipment, centrally and visibly located and open 24 hours a day. Police also are expected to visit homes and businesses regularly, especially concentrating on the elderly; prepare neighbourhood newsletters; go to community meetings; and organize sports events for youth. The Japanese brand of community policing has not detracted from hard-nosed law enforcement prowess; the police customarily solve more than 90 per cent of all homicides and three quarters of all thefts.

Last year, 10,557 people were killed by handguns in the United States, compared to 22 in the United Kingdom and 13 in Sweden. Programmes to control handguns and trace illegal weapons to their source have produced reductions in gun arrests and shootings of approximately 15 per cent and 25 per cent in New York City and Washington, D.C., respectively.

Montreal's Department of Community and Social Development has mounted a "Women and the City" programme ensuring adequate lighting and visibility, and safe design of public places and parking lots. "Tandem Montreal", implemented by the same agency, has neighbours working together for a safe environment. One neighbourhood moved prostitutes away without involving the police. Burglaries have been prevented when people let their neighbours know when they will be vacationing so that the home will be watched. Cleaning up and making continuous use of city parks rids them of drug dealers and addicts.

Self-help schemes have proven highly effective in well-organized communities. Specific crime prevention measures, such as neighbourhood block watches and neighbourhood courts, work best in partnership with local authorities, scrupulously avoiding vigilantism.

For a long time, China has used community mediation techniques to resolve conflicts. It has adopted a national law standardizing this practice and extending it to a wide variety of situations: family conflicts, behavioural problems of young people, neighbourhood quarrels and minor offences. It is believed that this practice reduces the incidence of crime and violence by promoting public skills in non-violent conflict resolution, facilitating effective rehabilitation measures and freeing the professional judiciary to concentrate on serious crime.

Neighbourhood groups throughout New York City are dealing with street crime. One such organization, the UMMA Group ("umma" is the Arabic word for "community" or "solidarity"), organizes volunteer civilian street and roof patrols as well as homework assistance for young people and regular monitoring of the safety of the elderly. Initiated by a Muslim congregation, the effort has expanded to include members of various races and religions, meets regularly with community leaders and elected officials and attends police precinct meetings.

A 1994 national crime prevention plan in the Philippines focuses on the the establishment of community and student prevention committees. A comprehensive study of the programme is being conducted in the cities in cooperation with the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI).

The potential of criminal justice and law enforcement as a force for social justice is rarely appreciated. Marginalized segments of the population feel little stake in law-abiding conduct when criminal acts by elite groups go unchallenged; conversely, equality before the law mitigates in favor of justice and opportunity for all.

The United Nations Crime Congress promulgated standards for the conduct of police officials, attorneys and members of the judiciary as well as the treatment of prisoners, and the Ninth Crime Congress will look at the problem of corruption of public officials. Through its Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, the United Nations fosters acceptance of these standards and educates criminal justice personnel in countries around the world. Particular attention has been paid to countries with UN peace-keeping missions and Governments attempting to make a rapid transition to democracy.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper
DPI/1646—95-93318—April 1995—6M

Backgrounder

Stop Crime

The Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

Crime Against the Environment: UN Sets Out Legal Options

A United Nations six-continent study of criminal justice responses to attacks on the natural environment will guide policy discussion at an unprecedented interdisciplinary workshop in Cairo, May 1995.

"We hope that the workshop at the UN's Ninth World Crime Congress will come up with clear options for the consideration of national and international policy makers", said Herman Woltring, director of the Rome-based UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

Among the conclusions of the two-year study:

• A key factor is the applicability of criminal sanctions to corporations. Although there are many different approaches to this principle, the international trend is towards liability of enterprises. "In cases of deliberate and knowing acts, such as dumping of hazardous wastes, businesses deserve to be placed under criminal sanctions", Mr. Woltring said. "As a corollary, the threat of criminal sanctions is a strong deterrent to such conduct. Corporations place great value on their goodwill, and this is adversely affected by the stigma of a criminal conviction."

• Classical criminal sanctions are insufficient to meet the challenges posed by environmental crimes. A broader spectrum of penalties is required, including sequestration of managers, audited compliance programmes and exclusion from government contracts. Some legal scholars envision the corporate equivalent of the death penalty: closure of the enterprise.

• The most effective countermeasures to cross-border pollution have been joint projects such as bilateral treaties, multilateral conventions and dispute resolution. Criminal law has not been easily applied to this area, due to variations among national criminal law systems. "We are hoping that a result of the Crime Congress workshop will be further studies that will lead to greater harmonization among criminal codes", Mr. Woltring said.

• Difficulties in applying criminal law to organizations and across borders have hindered the fight against international organized crime syndicates in the same fashion that they have made it difficult to penalize environmental crimes. "It is now recognized that the same factors that have allowed the internationalization of lawful business activity have also allowed the spread of transnational organized crime, including transnational environmental crime", Mr. Woltring said. He noted that a report to be presented to the Crime Congress workshop by the Italian Carabinieri and the Legambiente, an Italian non-governmental organization, suggests that the Mafia is heavily involved in waste disposal businesses, and may be undermining recycling efforts. Mr. Woltring said that the Carabinieri/Legambiente investigation is expected to lead to other studies, which are likely to reveal cross-boundary activities.

• Some acts of aggression, such as the deliberate dumping of toxic or nuclear wastes in the oceans and environmental terrorism, should be treated as international crimes.

• There are important roles for the UN system, including technical assistance, research, education and stimulation of interaction between

Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

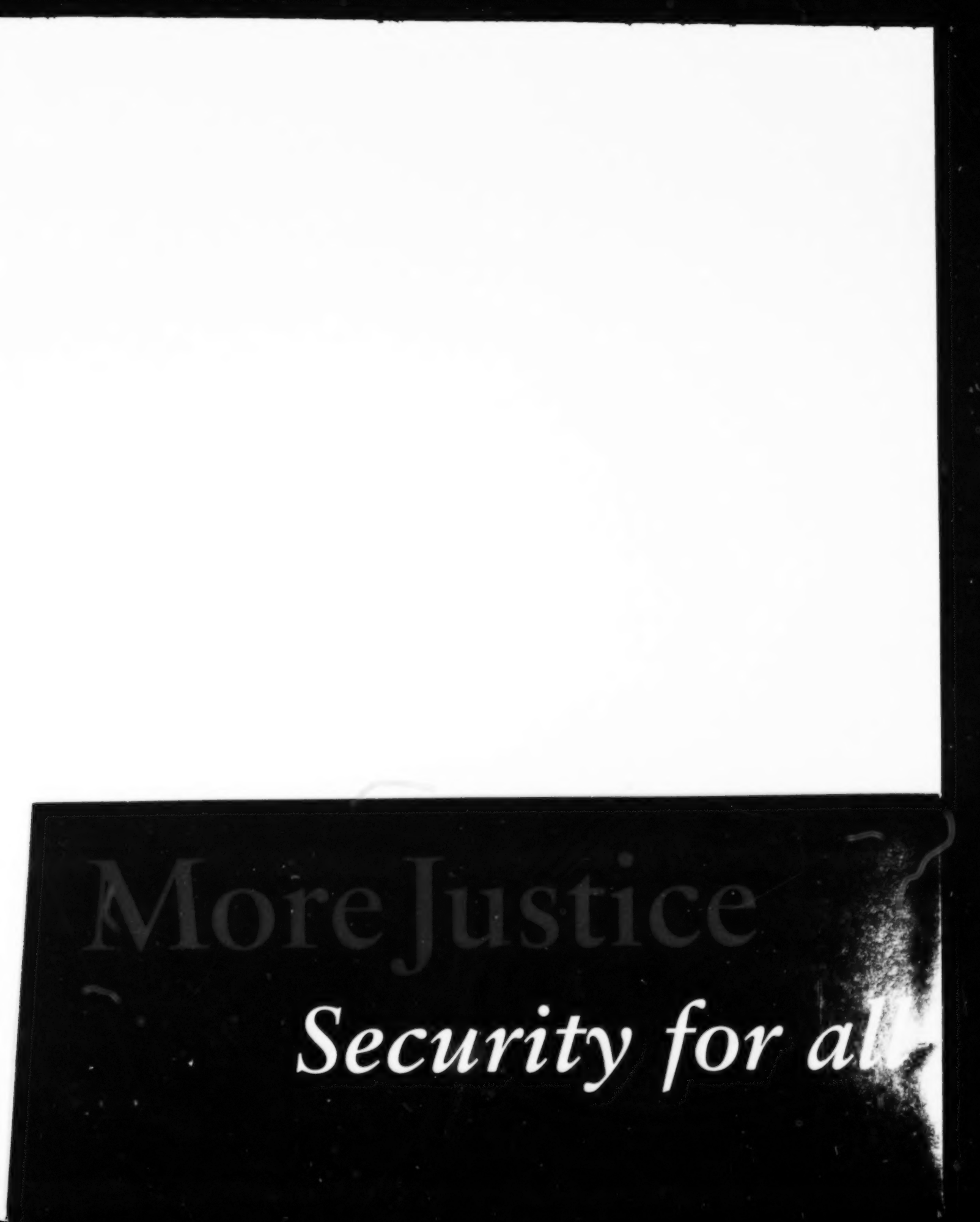
The UNICRI study correlates more than 90 case studies from 11 countries of divergent size, location, culture and legal systems — Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Poland, Sweden and Tunisia.

The work of UNICRI, as well as that of five affiliated and four associated regional institutes, is coordinated by the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch. Several of these criminological institutes participated in the study.

The study will be discussed in a workshop called "Environmental Protection at National and International Levels: Potentials and Limits of Criminal Justice". Discussion will take place concurrently with the plenary meetings of the Ninth United Nations World Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, taking place 29 April to 8 May 1995 in Cairo. The Congress is held under the auspices of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and organized by the UN's Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, both based in Vienna.

For more information on the environmental workshop or a copy of the study, contact Herman Woltring at the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Via Giulia 52, 00186, Rome, Italy; telephone 39-6-687-7437, fax 39-6-689-2638. The study will be available at, and after, the Congress.

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
Printed on recycled paper
DPI/1647—95-93321—April 1995—6M


More Justice
Security for al

Published by the United Nations
Department of Public Information
95-93180—DPI/1462—March 1995—6M